

## CPS Gives Aboriginal Inmates a Second Chance

By Ken McCluskey, Dave Place, Andrea McCluskey and Don Treffinger

In 1992-93, a program called Second Chance was offered to a number of aboriginal inmates in Manitoba (Place, 1994; Place & McCluskey, 1995). Since Creative Problem Solving (CPS) training was an integral part of the package, we thought we'd take this opportunity to share the findings and implications with the team from Buffalo and the readers of the Communiqué.

afterward, participants were monitored by the Department of Corrections. At the same time, a control group of 31 inmates from the same 21 reserves were selected and matched by computer search to be monitored as well. The control group was released without preparation or direction of any kind. We view them as representative of the majority of inmates who are "warehoused" and summarily deposited

*All had expressed a desire to "go straight."*

"The great aim of education is not knowledge, but action."

- Herbert Spencer

All participants were aboriginal (from the 21 First Nation Reserves served by Human Resources Development Canada in Selkirk, Manitoba), and all had run afoul of the law and served time in provincial jails. All 31 inmates (27 male and 4 female), ranging in age from 19 to 46, had served sentences for theft, fraud, breaking and entering, assault, physical and sexual abuse (of women and or children), or murder (as a young offender).

Participants of Second Chance had served their sentences and been cleared for release to half-way houses or on their own recognizance. All had expressed a desire to "go straight." The program gave them an opportunity to receive pre-release support before re-entering the community. During the life of the project, and for one year

back into society, without intervention, after serving their sentences.

The reason for the development of Second Chance is the distressingly high recidivism rate for inmates leaving prison. Some estimates suggest that recidivism rates of 50%-70% are not unusual (e.g, Correction Services, 1991; Gendreau, Mad-

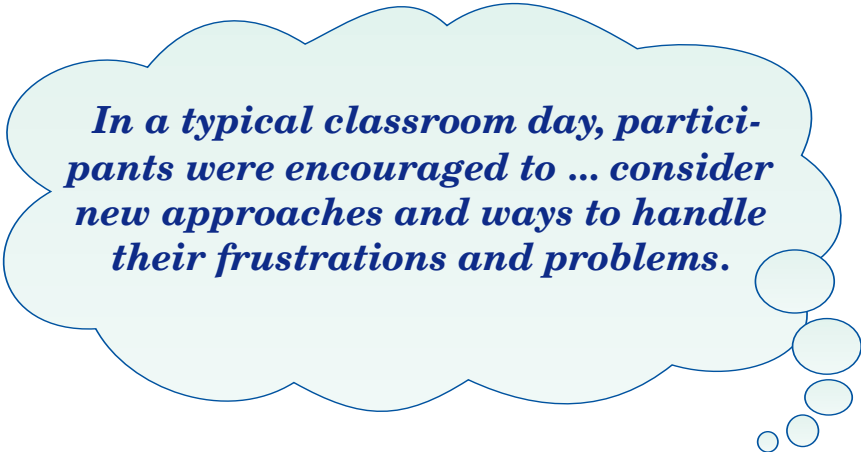
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den & Leipziger, 1977). Despite some questions as to who should be considered “native” in their sample, Canfield and Drinnan (1991) suggested that recidivism may in fact be higher among aboriginals. (Of the 31 participants in Second Chance, 18 had previous convictions and these participants were chosen from those who wanted to improve their lot in life.) Considering the lack of opportunity and the social plight of our native people, it would make sense

verbal communication, groupthink, self-concept, self-fulfilling prophecy, and conflict resolution. (McCluskey, Treffinger, Isaksen & McCluskey, in press).

Moving to CPS (Isaksen, Dorval & Treffinger, 1994; Treffinger, Isaksen & Dorval, 1994), we started out by teaching the participants several tools in rather direct fashion following the Creative Learning Model (Treffinger, Isaksen & Dorval, 1994). Our in-



***In a typical classroom day, participants were encouraged to ... consider new approaches and ways to handle their frustrations and problems.***

for the recidivism rate to be higher among that population. Therefore, we decided to explore this further and intervene if possible.

There were two phases to Second Chance. The first was an 11-week life skills (classroom activities) component, the second a four-week supervised work experience. Participants were also monitored for one year following the program with no further intervention taking place. During the follow-up year, the ex-inmates could either “go straight” or re-offend.

To begin the life skills portion, we ran each inmate through a battery of inventories (interest, learning style, academic, and vocational), and used that information to help plot direction and develop individual growth plans (Feldhusen, 1995). Emphasis was placed on career exploration and employment skills (including resume writing, interviewing, and job search). To get ready for CPS, a variety of other topics were covered, including verbal and non-

tent was to help the inmates begin to organize problem-solving strategies and ensure that they could learn to apply the tools not only in the sheltered classroom situation, but later in real life settings as well. In a typical classroom day, participants were encouraged to identify concerns, paradoxes, and challenges, to think about the other point of view, to examine different alternatives, and to consider new approaches and ways to handle their frustrations and problems.

It was essential for the participants to recognize creative thinking as a divergent process and to use it to generate new alternatives. Equally important was the need for them to learn to think more critically - to narrow the focus in convergent fashion to identify pragmatic, realistic solutions to their dilemmas. To make their way in the larger social setting, individuals must select alternatives that not only meet their own needs, but also fit within the prevailing norms. We suspect that recidi-

vist inmates are not especially skillful in this regard.

Many participants appreciated specific tools such as CARTS (evaluating Cost, Acceptance, Resources, Time, and Space of alternatives). For many of us, it's second nature to consider these criteria, but it became apparent that most of the inmates had not assimilated these sorts of skills early in life. Instead, their impulsive, unsystematic styles consistently created more problems than they solved. Fabiano, Robinson and Porporino (1990) and Ross and Fabiano (1985) proposed that offenders often act out in impulsive, egocentric fashion which, not surprisingly, interferes with decision making, employability, and general functioning in society.

The inmates then took a more active role by practicing problem-solving skills in the supportive, non-threatening lifeskills classroom. Gradually, they became comfortable with the tools and processes, and eager to have the opportunity to work with real-life problems in on-the-job situations. The month-long job placement enabled us to monitor and receive feedback about the participants' performance, and to support them in fine-tuning and building their skills.

Group interaction during the job placement facilitated bonding, provided a support system (the first for many), and encouraged participants to listen, empathize, and help each other find innovative new solutions to old problems. In group sessions, participants explored promising possibilities, examined potential directions, and developed practical action plans.

The program also encouraged the inmates to start giving some thought to their actions. For many, conforming blindly to the will of peers had led to poor decision making and a life of crime. Several of the CPS tools had

shown them how to overcome this barrier and move toward a positive, productive lifestyle. At the conclusion of the classroom portion of the project, most ex-inmates were able to identify their own style of problem solving.

For the month-long work experience portion of the program, participants were placed in a job setting. Eighteen employers volunteered to serve as workplace hosts, and ex-inmates were placed in a variety of positions (e.g., in warehouses, construction, fast food restaurants, furniture factories, hair styling, offices, photography studios, grocery stores, recreation centers, the fishing industry, etc.). There was direct, intensive monitoring of the participants' performance on the job site. Participants also returned to the classroom on a regular basis to discuss their progress. This gave each person a chance to seek feedback and advice from the facilitator and from peers.

**S e c o n d**  
Chance had a tremendous impact. The extent of the recidivism problem among native inmates was

highlighted by monitoring the non-treated group (i.e., those who did not participate in the training program). After a year, 90.32% (28 of 31) of these individuals faced additional charges since release. The alarmingly high rate of recidivism in the control group is something of an indictment of our prison system which releases criminals, without any preparation, only to have them re-offend time and time again.

In contrast, only 38.71% (12 of 31) of the Second Chance participants re-offended. This recidivism rate is still far too high, but it certainly represents a marked improvement. These data indicate that a blended program of life skills, CPS, and on-the-job training can significantly reduce recidivism among native inmates. We are not so naive as to suppose it will be possible to cut the actual dollars spent in our prisons by 51.61%, but a pronounced reduc-

***Second Chance had a tremendous impact.***

tion could well become realistic through this type of intervention. The Second Chance results suggest that it is definitely worth exploring the possibilities further.

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Fisher, James R. (1998). *Six silent killers: management's greatest challenge*. Boca Raton, FL: St. Lucie Press. ISBN: 1-57444-152 / 291 pages / \$ 27.95 or \$ 19.57-Amazon.com.

In this book, Fisher presents models for three phases of cultural development: Culture of Comfort; Culture of Complacency; and Culture of Contribution. Six "productive" organizational activities, commonly initiated by senior management, are dispelled as "unproductive" to a contributory culture. Fisher goes on to analogize that just as termites destroy a home, "social termites" (employees with destructive behaviors) destroy and undermine an organization's infrastructure. Managing these covert-destructive behaviors (Six Silent Killers) are one of management's greatest challenges.

Fisher doesn't pull any punches in this book, and I like that. His brilliant and succinct writing style makes this book an absolute must for anyone who: a) makes decisions about em-

ployees (hiring, firing, performance assessments, etc.); b) can't put their finger on employee challenges; and c) is looking to improve productivity and well being in their workplace.

### Reviewer's Note:

As I read this book, I realized that three of six employees in my restaurant business were clearly "social termites." I was working hard, but getting nowhere, spending all my time putting out fires. This book provided me with the insights into employee behaviors on which I was then able to take action. My sales are up, customers are happy, and other workers seem to enjoy their work more. IN other words, productivity is up. I no longer spend all my time putting out fires. I now spend my time managing a "successful, creative business" and leading the ENTIRE organization, not just an un-chosen few. I wish I had had this book 30 years ago, but I am grateful that I have it now! Thank you James R. Fisher Jr.!!!

Glenn V. Wilson

## Creativity Web Sites

By Glenn Wilson

**Editor's Note:** *This is a compilation of a few sites pertaining to creativity which the contributor, Glenn Wilson, has come across during his time "surfing the net." This does not serve as a comprehensive list of creativity sites, nor is it meant as an endorsement for the sites or organizations which are related to those sites.*

**<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~caveman/creative>**

Creativity Web: Resources for Creativity and Innovation: This could be one of the premier web sites in the world. This site contains wonderful data from books and resources, monthly creative techniques, humor, affirmations, children's corner, software, etc. It is a nice place to start. When you are there, don't forget to enter into the "index" and browse. It's quite dynamic, with over 370 web site location references. You could be there for a month!

**<http://www.waterw.com/~lucia/awlinks.html#crea>**

This web site is for those who appreciate a random plethora of creativity sites. It has everything from book reviews to famous quotes about creativity and innovation, to Buzan's "Mind Mapping" techniques, to ways to boost your creativity. Also, other creativity web page connections are available. A great resource for those who like an eclectic view of the field. Includes: General Creativity, The Psychology of Creativity; Spirituality and Art (relating to creativity); (Creative) Organization; Personal Resources for Creative People; and Essential Humor (with a creative twist).

**<http://www.routing.se/avica/rd.htm>**

Absolute Creativity: Creativity, learning, quality, dyslexia, speed reading, management, psychology and beyond. Despite the sometimes overwhelming amount of links (over 1500), it is a great site if you're looking to tie creativity in with other disciplines.

**<http://www.cef-cpsi.org/>**

The Creative Education Foundation Web Page. This page describes the Creative Education Foundation, their membership services, and the Creative Problem Solving Institute. The part of the web page I use here the most is "Publication Department." Since 1967, CEF has been dedicated to publishing "The Journal of Creative Behavior" and providing a resource for books dedicated to the field of creativity. There are some great resources here. Classic books in the field that have been out of print for years are being republished and made available from CEF.

**<http://www.directedcreativity.com>**

Paul Plsek's: Directed creativity™ Web Page. This site is based on Paul's book Creativity, Innovation and Quality. The book relates creativity to quality initiatives. This site has ten web sites listed with one paragraph explanations for each. It also includes a creativity bookstore based out of Amazon.com, the world's largest on-line bookstore.

*Glenn Wilson is the President of CEO Consultants in Zelienople, PA. Glenn is also a valued contributor of book reviews and other information for the Communiqué.*

## Using CPS for Logistics Planning

by Keith Kaminski

Logistics are defined as “the managing of the details of an undertaking.” When these behind the scenes details are managed correctly, they are nearly invisible to your clients. Poor logis-

tics seek combinations, freewheel). Here, I recommend the use of a modified Morphology Matrix. Some sample options for each parameter are included in the figure below.

Logistics Planning Matrix		
Before	During	After
Gather supplies	Meet with John Doe	Create summary report
Book travel arrangements	Take pictures of event	Send thank you letters
Have team briefing meeting	Ensure break food and coffee	Submit expenses to accounting
Edit John Doe article	Manage registration table	Debrief experience
Send products to hotel	Inventory materials	Team celebration party

tics planning makes you and your organization look unprepared and inefficient. Managing these details is a basic and fundamental component in almost any type of work. However, they may be easily overlooked by only focusing on the highest priority tasks (i.e. landing a keynote presenter for your conference or marketing to increase attendance in your training course).

As a Program Manager for CPS-B, one of my responsibilities is to manage logistics for the services we provide to our clients. Provided in this article are some general logistics tips through the use of Creative Problem Solving (CPS). I have found that the following techniques for using common CPS tools is a practical and easy way to accurately prepare for the details.

This process is especially useful when preparing for complex events such as a conference or training course. Assuming you have the design in place for what needs to be accomplished (i.e. we are offering our training course in nine months), you can generate options for tasks that need to happen to ensure success. (CPS is also useful for developing your project). Be sure to use the guidelines for generating options (defer judgment, strive for quantity,

During this generation phase, it will be helpful to call on the support of your colleagues. Their suggestions for what needs to be done may reveal very important “to do’s” you might have missed. If you are fortunate enough to have this support, create three flip chart pages and label them: Before; During; and After. Use Post-it® notes to generate your tasks. This technology allows you to generate at a faster pace when using a group.

Once you feel that you have a significant number of details in front of you, choose all the options that must get done to make your project a success. Be sure to follow the guidelines for focusing options (use affirmative judgment, be deliberate, stay on course, and consider novelty). It is possible that each option generated is a task that must get done. However, some of the options may be too general (i.e. gather supplies). Pull out these important, but general, options from the matrix and expand on them. If “gather supplies” needs to get done, then generate a list of supplies that need to be collected. Once you have chosen the supplies that you need, be sure to create a checklist. This helps to avoid asking yourself the question: “am I forgetting anything?”

Now you have three long lists of tasks

that need to be accomplished before, during, and after the event. You've expanded and further developed the tasks that need more detail. Now what? To further refine your logistics plan, I recommend prioritizing the tasks in each parameter (before, during, and after) using the Short, Medium, and Long (SML) tool. When using SML, it is important to designate time frames. This clarifies time deadlines for when tasks need to be completed. If you have used Post-it® notes for your generation, you can easily transfer them to an SML created on a flip chart. The table below provides an example of how the SML tool might be used to prioritize tasks before the event.

For very large and complex projects (i.e. conferences with over 1000 people in atten-

on to discuss what needs to be improved (limitations). When phrasing limitations, state them in the form of a question like "How to..." or "In what ways might I (we)..." This invites you to problem solve the options. Next, record what happened that was unexpected (unique qualities) and lastly, describe what you would do to improve next time (overcoming limitations).

For those readers who are familiar with CPS, I hope this article provided you with some insights into another way in which CPS can be customized to meet a challenge. For those readers who are unfamiliar with CPS, and want to learn more, visit our web site at: [www.cpsb.com](http://www.cpsb.com). Click on "Services" and follow the link to "Upcoming Courses". Here you'll find the up-to-date schedule of CPS training. I

Planning Logistics "Before the Event"		
Short Term (1-3 mos. from now)	Medium Term (3-6 mos. from now)	Long Term (6-9 mos. from now)
Book travel arrangements	Buy supplies using checklist.	Send products to hotel Edit John Doe Article

dance), you may need to go one level deeper in your logistics planning. Here, using the Goal Directed Project Management (GDPM) method may be helpful (see reference for ordering information).

You have spent the time to plan out the details. Your project was a success - you truly met your client's needs. What now? *After the project, debrief the experience.* Being explicit and deliberate about debriefing your experience deepens your learning. You will be better able to reach new levels of success next time you prepare for a project. This is a helpful way to get ready for the next project and/or to help a colleague with his/her project. Following the ALUo (Advantages, Limitations, Unique Qualities, and Overcome Limitations) tool format provides a simple structure. Write down your personal thoughts along with your team's (if applicable) of what worked well (advantages). After you've generated a good list, move

wish you the best of luck in planning all of your events!

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Andersen, E.K., Grude, K.V. (1984). *Goal Directed Project Management: Effective Techniques and Strategies*. Kogan Page Limited. London, UK.

*Keith Kaminski is the newest full-time employee at CPS-B. He is responsible for most of CPS-B's logistics planning.*

## INTRODUCING THE CREATIVITY RESEARCH UNIT

# CRU

## Creativity Research Unit

Improving our understanding and application of creativity is a driving factor in the mission of CPS-B. To help us implement this mission fully, we created the Creativity Research Unit (CRU). The CRU is designed to create new knowledge, information, and insights by conducting investigations and studies of creativity and change with individuals, groups, and organizations. These investigations and studies are shared through the publication of monographs and articles in academic journals and made available to CPS-B clients. A further purpose of the CRU is to maintain CPS-B's product leadership in its existing services and to fuel the development of new products and services.

The CRU has three main components: Scholarly Inquiry, Applied Research, and Maintaining a Database of Creativity Assessment Results.

**Scholarly Inquiry** is our basic research focusing on creativity and change. To support our research we maintain a comprehensive library of books and periodical literature on several subjects.

**Applied Research** is the inquiry we conduct through the CRU with the intention of examining a specific problem or question we have discovered or are asked to explore by our clients.

**A Database of Creativity Assessments** is maintained from the results of inventories and other instruments used in our consulting and learning services. The database is used to support a variety of research projects. Our internationally renowned group of Re-

search Fellows include:

Dr. Göran Ekvall  
Professor Emeritus, Industrial and Organizational  
Psychology  
University of Lund - Sweden

Dr. Scott G. Isaksen  
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Center for Studies in Creativity - USA

Dr. Guido Prato-Previde  
Founder  
Decathlon Consulting - Italy

Dr. Donald J. Treffinger  
President, Center for Creative Learning and  
Professor of Education, University of Sarasota -  
USA

## CPS-B FUN FACTS

Look for Ken Lauer and his children to be featured in the November 1998 issue of Family Fun Magazine.

While attending Buffalo State College, Keith Kaminski was very actively involved in the Business Organization Phi Beta Lambda. He served as National Eastern Region Vice President in 1996.

Our own K. Brian Dorval is an avid tennis fan and player. At one time he was a professional tennis coach and instructor for a number of clubs. He recently received an outstanding student/athlete performance award at Rhode Island College, his alma matter.

Keefe, Cynthia, and Smith, Linda Z. (1998). *Creating yes: Moving toward the positive and more fully aware life*. Midland, MI: Creative Spirit Center, Inc. ISBN: 0-9664238-0-1 / \$24.95 (would be a best buy at twice the price) / 123 pages

I am really excited about this unique “play and workbook” based on Marian Settineri’s 22 imaginative and colorful drawings entitled “The Unraveling Process” (this “unraveling process” is actually the artist’s graphic representations of stages in a problem solving process)! Each drawing has its own page on which you will find: a beautiful color reproduction of the drawing; its title along with key words and phrases (to spur your thinking); and a full page of space to write, draw, and capture your thoughts, feelings, or interpretation of the piece on that page. Now for the best part. The book is spiral bound so it can be positioned vertically on a table. Each picture (being on

the outside of the page) can be exposed to the outside of the book, forming a carousel of pictures in a complete circle, making an attractive table centerpiece! With this in mind, you will want to buy two. One as a private workbook (like Julia Cameron’s “The Artist’s Way”), and one for public viewing (great table piece or mobile in an entrance way of your “creative workplace”).

Additional chapters include sections dedicated to using and applying the book in different personal and business contexts. To purchase a copy of this wonderful book, contact the Creative Spirit Center at 1-517-837-1885. If you are ever in Midland, stop and say hi to Linda and Cynthia, get them to sign your copy of the book, and view the original artwork. Enjoy!

Glenn V. Wilson

**WHAT YOU'VE MISSED...**

***CPS-B welcomed Keith Kaminski as a full-time employee upon receiving his undergraduate business degree from Buffalo State College.***

***CPS-B extends Congratulations to Sue Besemer who succeeded in defending her doctoral dissertation this summer in Norway. Good Luck in the future!***

***CPS-B welcomes John Gaulin to the world of consulting. John's areas of expertise include Quality, CPS, and strategic architecture.***

***Thanks to Don Treffinger, Andy Wilkins, and Brian Dorval, CPS has now traveled to five of the world's continents.***

## Welcome to the Tips Column Resource Group

by Kristin Isaksen

As I sat down to begin work on this issue of Communiqué, I was struck with the idea of developing a resource group from which I could draw some helpful tips to provide to you, the readers, in the Tips Column. After discussing this idea with a few fellow CPS-B employees, letters were sent to various associates of CPS-B to inquire about their interest in becoming a member of the Tips Resource Group.

Before I share the fruits of this group's first column, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and thank those associates who responded to my letter and agreed to help me. The tips you will be seeing in this issue, and in the future, are brought to you courtesy of: Allan Brooks of The Centre for Creative Change - UK; Glenn Wilson of CEO Consultants - USA; John Gaulin of Success Force, Inc. - USA; Doug Reid of Douglas Reid and Associates - USA; Andy Wilkins, CPS-B Associate - UK; Mary Wallgren of The Procter & Gamble Company - USA; Alan Arnett of PricewaterhouseCoopers - UK; Debbie Clarke-Nilsson of Skandinavisk Press AP-IMP Group - Sweden; Luc DeSchryver of Creativity & Innovation Center-Europe - Belgium; and me.

I would also like to thank my teammates at CPS-B for their input in all aspects of this column from the selection of resource group members, to the locating of other resources from which to draw.

*The Tips Column is open to anyone, inside or outside of the resource group. If you have a tip which you would like to share, please send them to:*

**Communiqué Tips Column  
c/o Kristin Isaksen  
1325 North Forest Road  
Suite F-340  
Williamsville, NY 14221  
USA**

## PROGRAM TIPS COLUMN

Emphasize experiential learning and giving people the opportunity to learn as opposed to lecturing to them.

Tie the program into a longer term strategy. Showing how the learning will help in the future gives it deeper meaning.

Let the concepts captured in a group discussion create a pictorial analogy in your mind. Use this picture to help facilitate focused conversation among the group.

Learn as much as possible about the culture of the group with which you will be working.

Avoid filling a program with too much information. Instead, let the group move at a comfortable pace.

Be sure to involve management in the program to help ensure appropriate follow up in the workplace.

Model the attitudes and behavior you expect and create the appropriate climate.

Ensure the program gives the appropriate balance between all the elements of the learning cycle.

Real learning requires far fewer overheads than you think!

Be sure to get the participants actively involved. This is particularly important early on as well as late in the day.

Pay attention to group development during the program. Participants are not just individual learners, they are also a group with shared experience.

Do not assume that the participants know why they are there.

Be sure to clarify the roles of the participants, as well as your own role.

## Editor's Note:

As a background for the following article, this next little bit of information is intended to briefly introduce the Situational Outlook Questionnaire and foster a better understanding of the article which follows it. For further information on the Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ), please contact Ken Lauer at CPS-B.

The Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ) is our English version of the questionnaire that stems from the original work of Dr. Göran Ekvall of the Swedish Council on Work Life Issues in Stockholm, Sweden. The SOQ examines psychological aspects of the work environment - commonly referred to as "organizational climate." We use the SOQ to help people develop a better understanding of the perceptions they have of the environment in which they work. The SOQ measures the **situational outlook for creativity and change** on the following nine dimensions:

*Challenge/Involvement* - The degree to which members of the organization are involved in its daily operations and long-term goals.

*Freedom* - The independence in behavior exerted by the people in the organization.

*Trust/Openness* - The emotional safety in relationships.

*Idea Time* - The amount of time people can use (and do use) for elaborating new ideas.

*Playfulness/Humor* - The spontaneity and ease displayed in the workplace.

*Conflict* - The presence of personal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debate dimension) in the organization.

*Idea Support* - The way new ideas are treated.

*Debate* - The occurrence of encounters and disagreements between viewpoints, ideas, and differing experiences and knowledge.

*Risk-Taking* - The tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity exposed in the workplace.

## Competencies and Guidelines for Situational Outlook Questionnaire Practitioners - Part One

By Gwen Speranzini

Many of us use assessments in our work as change practitioners. I would like to share a practical list of activities and practitioner competencies developed from my recent experience in debriefing the Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ). The SOQ is a measure available through the Creative Problem Solving Group - Buffalo (CPS-B) that examines several aspects of the work environment referred to as organizational climate.

The process of debriefing the SOQ requires a multifaceted knowledge and skill set. These debriefing competencies are important in extracting meaningfulness and usefulness from the data and in strengthening an effective SOQ intervention. The first of this two-part series describes the specifics of understanding the client's needs, distributing and analyzing the measure, and preparing for the feedback session. Part two of the series considers the face-to-face session including delivery of the information, summarizing the result, and extending the experience into future-oriented next steps.

During this first stage, the SOQ practitioner prepares him/her self and the client for engaging in the SOQ intervention event. Listed below are six major activities, the time required to perform each, and the knowledge and skill set required of the practitioner.

**Activity 1 The SOQ practitioner conducts a Task Appraisal with the client.** The time required for this activity is approxi-

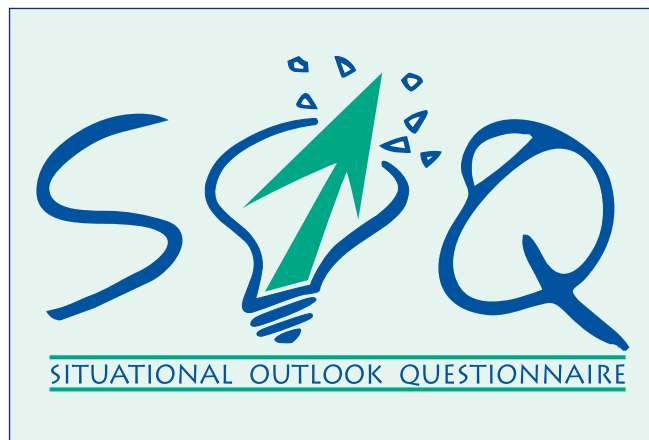
mately 2 hours.

### Intent:

1. To gain clarity of the need and intent of the SOQ intervention.
2. To guide process planning and to establish the focus for developing debrief questions.

3. To clarify the roles of the client, participants, and SOQ practitioner.

4. To set the stage for a safe environment where the client can receive, accept, reflect and develop the SOQ results.



A series of questions guide this

discussion. The structured conversation involves delivering the prepared questions, listening, observing, evaluating, probing and recording responses. From this structured discussion, the kind and degree of ownership, ambiguity, complexity, novelty, time, history, vision, and task importance can be determined. Some sample questions appear below.

Personal Orientation - understanding the key people involved.

Who are the participants? What are their jobs? What do you hope to gain from this task? What can they hope to gain?

Situational Outlook - understanding the context in which change will take place.

What are the key challenges facing your workplace today? Do you think people are happy working here? Is there a certain time frame

within which you need this information?

Desired Outcomes - understanding the task. Why do you think an intervention is necessary? What do you hope to learn that you don't know now? What have you already thought of or tried? What are some of the historical challenges? What are some of the plans for the future? What are the goals of this intervention?

Methodology - understanding the appropriateness of using and debriefing the SOQ. Describe the SOQ intervention as one solution. Explain the ethics, confidentiality, qualifications, standards, research and storage policies of CPS-B and yourself as an SOQ practitioner. What obstacles do you see in using the SOQ? Do you want to hold an individual or group feedback session?

#### Knowledge and Skills required of the SOQ Practitioner

- Specific knowledge of the purpose and components of Task Appraisal.
- Specific knowledge of the roles of the client, the SOQ practitioner, and the participants.
- Specific knowledge of the SOQ, what it measures, its uses, and limitations.
- A clear understanding of the ethics, confidentiality, qualifications, standards, research, and storage policies of CPS-B and yourself as an SOQ practitioner.
- Skill at using open and closed questions and a good understanding of the role they play in eliciting information.
- Skill at spontaneously interjecting probing questions to elicit richness and depth of information.
- The ability to defer judgment, listen to understand and build, and to use collaborative language. In fact, to practice the skills, behaviors, and attitudes that successfully establish a climate for change and innovation throughout the debrief itself.

**Activity 2** The client and the SOQ practitioner make a decision whether or not to conduct the SOQ intervention. If so, they gain agreement on the scope, timeline, and cost. The time required for this activity is approximately 2 hours.

#### Output:

1. Explicit goal(s) and objective(s) of the SOQ intervention including learning objectives.
2. The defined area of focus and a complete list of participants and addresses.
3. The method of feedback - individual, group, or both.
4. To provide as much client preview as possible on what to expect from the data results. Sample reports and data displays are useful.
5. Set specific dates for next steps.

#### Knowledge and Skills required of the SOQ Practitioner

- Knowledge of other measures, instruments, processes, tools, and techniques and how they might be used in conjunction with the SOQ.
- Knowledge of the processing time and cost structure of CPS-B.
- Skill at writing clear and measurable performance objectives.
- Skill on all levels of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive learning. Specifically, the ability to break down the components of the task appraisal and to synthesize them into a new whole incorporating the SOQ measure, then making an evaluation that would lead to the use or rejection of the SOQ as an intervention.
- Skill in the development of the affective domain learning and its application to a debrief of the SOQ.

**Activity 3** Order the SOQ forms from CPS-B gaining agreement on the timeline, methods of data display, and cost. It is important that the SOQ data is displayed

**in such a way as to respond to the needs of the client while honoring the confidentiality of the participants.** The time required for this activity is approximately 1 hour.

When selecting the methods of data display consider the goals and objectives of the SOQ intervention. CPS-B has several display formats for both quantitative and qualitative data. Select quantitative comparator data that is relevant to the client and the participants. Choose a manageable volume considering the time and complexity of the situation.

#### Knowledge and Skills required of the SOQ Practitioner

- Specific knowledge as to the SOQ data display vehicles and comparator data available through CPS-B.

**Activity 4 The SOQ practitioner along with the client prepares a cover letter to participants.** The time required for this activity is approximately 2 hours.

Cover letters need to consider the purpose of the SOQ intervention; provide a description of what the SOQ is assessing; discuss the specific area of focus, for example, a work unit, a physical location, a team, a division etc.; define the roles of the participant, client and SOQ practitioner; include a request for honest, well-considered input with a guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality; explain the method of results feedback; announce the questionnaire completion deadline and provide a thank you for their time, effort, and view.

#### Knowledge and Skills required of the SOQ Practitioner

- The ability to craft a letter that is clear, confident, and persuasive.

**Activity 5 The SOQ practitioner analyzes the data results.** The time required for this activity is approximately 2 hours.

Has any sensitive data appeared? Is further investigation necessary? Is the volume appropriate? Are some data displays more/less useful than others? In what ways have the results tied into the established goals and objectives of the intervention? What are the strengths and the areas of concern that emerge from the results? What are some potential actions or recommendations?

#### Knowledge and Skills required of the SOQ Practitioner

- The ability to hold the total picture at multiple levels. To see the SOQ detailed results within the context of the organization and within the context of SOQ theory and research.
- The ability to be objective and open to multiple options and points of view.

**Activity 6 The SOQ practitioner plans the debrief process/agenda.** The time required for this activity is approximately 4 hours.

The feedback meeting with the client should be planned for about 2 hours. The process plan has 4 major components as listed below.

1) Agenda. There is no right or wrong way to order the activities of an SOQ debrief. The following represents one way, going from broad to narrow:

- Establish the physical and psychological climate.
- Gain agreement to agenda and time frames.
- Overview of the SOQ history, psychometric time.
- Prepare the data display materials.
- Qualitative results. Allot 30 minutes of meeting time.
- Prepare data display materials.
- Quantitative results. Allot 30 minutes of meeting time.
- Recommendations. Allot 10 minutes of meeting time. Prepare some potential

actions or recommendations that might be helpful to the client.

i) Summary. Allot 10 minutes of meeting time. Allow time for the client to assimilate the data and to draw linkages to the goals and objectives of the session.

j) Extending. Allot 40 minutes of meeting time. This section is where the client begins to develop the learnings and transform the learnings into plans of action.

2) Handout package. In the package of handouts for the client, you may want to include a customized “Assessing the Climate for Innovation” document, the SOQ Feedback report from CPS-B, a copy of the cover letter and the participant list. The SOQ practitioner will want a duplicate copy with side notes and highlights to help guide the discussion. Package in a 3-ring binder or portfolio as there is a risk that the data will become disorganized during the session.

3) Establishing Physical and Psychological Safety. The best way to understand climate for innovation is to experience it. One role of the SOQ practitioner is to create such a climate throughout the feedback meeting. Be open, honest, and trusting through words, actions, body language, and tone. Every effort must be made to assist the client in being objective, maintaining self esteem, and staying open to learning opportunities. Avoid formal boardrooms. Find a location that is quiet, private, casual, and comfortable. Select an appropriate time of day. Agreed-to video taping of the session allows the client to review at his/her leisure.

4) Processing preparation. To gain full engagement of the client, as much of the learning as possible should be by *doing* rather than *telling*. Go through each step of the agenda and devise a way to avoid telling. Pre-read the materials and results and highlight the key topics on the SOQ practitioner's copy of the materials. This helps guide the discussion and

ensure that major points are covered. Have a list of probing questions prepared ahead of time to help stimulate thinking.

### Knowledge and Skills required of the SOQ Practitioner

- Knowledge of experiential learning process and techniques
- The ability to visualize the flow and anticipate potential hazards

### In Closing

You will have spent upwards of thirteen hours preparing for a quality SOQ feedback event. The above demonstrates the complex and multi-faceted knowledge and skill set required of the SOQ practitioner. The implications of these data lead to the understanding that an SOQ practitioner requires a significant level of competency in the areas of task appraisal, experiential learning (process and techniques), SOQ theory and measure, the interpersonal skills of listening, questioning, probing, and closing; other compatible measures, instruments, processes, tools and techniques; writing performance objectives; processing on all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive learning; and advanced levels of metacognition.

Further expansion on the activities, knowledge, and skills are available through CPS-B. Part two of the series considers the face-to-face session including delivery of the information, summarizing the result, and extending the experience into future-oriented next steps.

***Editor's Note: Please see the next edition (Version 7) of the Communiqué for part two of Ms. Speranzini's article.***

*Gwen Speranzini is an independent consultant in organizational effectiveness. For over fifteen years Gwen has focused on learning and change within individuals, teams, and organizations. She applies principles from the field of creativity and innovation to drive business results. She is currently pursuing her doctoral studies in the UK.*

## CPS-B FUN FACTS

SGI & Associates became CPS-B in 1991 to reflect the company's focus on Creative Problem Solving (CPS) and the expanding number of people working closely with Scott Isaksen.

Talk about dedication! On average, Scott and Brian spend about 30 out of 52 weeks each year on the road working with clients.

In 16 years of existence, CPS-B headquarters has been housed in three locations. (Scott's guest room, an apartment, and, our present location, an office building)

McGartland, Grace (1994). *Thunderbolt thinking: Transform your insights and options into powerful business results*. Austin, TX: Bernard-Davis. ISBN: 0-9632785-0-9 / \$13.56-Amazon.com / 254 pages.

In this book, the author presents a "people powered model that brings minds together and transforms them" (pg. 50). That sentence tends to scare me and I wrote it! The 3 components of the model are: 1) what one needs to think about, 2) how to think about it; and 3) the spirit. The model is based on the principle that: "when you give your people a process for HOW to think, the answers to the specific WHAT (the issue, topic, problem) emerge" (pg. 53). To clarify: We don't need the WHAT because it will emerge from the HOW; and the Spirit has no effect on the HOW or the WHAT because it deals mainly with attitudes (output) of the presenters.

In my role as a professional problem-solving facilitator, I am quite concerned when I read comments like the following in any "process" book:

"So if you want answers, stop spending time focusing directly on the problem, issue, or topic itself and start thinking about HOW you want people to think ..." (pg. 54); and

"Try to avoid the *why* questions. They tend to create havoc when they are improperly wielded" (pg. 132).

I feel this model, as presented, could inhibit creative thinking and processes necessary to create business transformation! Thunderbolt thinking is light, but does present some excellent resources and quotes. I think Grace says it best when she stated: "It takes courage to use the Thunderbolt Model, to break through the wall of fear and criticism that threatens to stop you" (pg. 97). At last we agree on something!

Glenn V. Wilson

## UPCOMING EVENTS

February 4-6, 1999  
**Mind, Body, & Personality: The Role of Type in Mental and Physical Health**  
Second Annual Clinical Conference  
Chairs: Judith Provost and Charles Martin  
Gainesville, Florida

Toll-Free 1-800-777-CAPT(2278) for information

April 15-17, 1999  
**Leadership and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**  
*“Enhancing Leadership for the New Millennium - Psychological Type  
as Model and Process”*  
CAPT Third Biennial Leadership Conference  
Chair: Roger Pearman  
Washington, DC

Toll-Free 1-800-777-CAPT(2278) for information

April 28-May 1, 1999  
**The 10th Annual American Creativity Association Convention**  
Sponsored by: The American Creativity Association  
Akron, Ohio

Registration by Phone: 302-239-7673  
Registration by Fax: 302-234-2840  
Registration by E-mail: AmCreAsso@aol.com  
Electronic Registration: <http://www.Becreative.org>

June 10-13, 1999  
**Navigating the Future: Servant-Leadership and Community Leadership  
in the 21st Century**  
Sponsored By: The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership and The National  
Association for Community Leadership  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Registration by Phone: 317-259-1241  
Registration by Fax: 317-259-0560

# Learn Skills for Managing Change

Facilitating CPS is a training course which provides individuals with skills to manage small groups using Creative Problem Solving (CPS). CPS is a portable and flexible change process containing over a dozen simple tools and an easy-to-use language. It stems from over 50 years of experience with problem solving and change management and has been proven effective through research, practical application, and continuous improvement.

During the course, you will learn to:

- Use CPS process, language, and tools to identify problems, generate alternatives, and transform possible solutions into action.
- Diagnose the needs of a situation and use CPS to productively focus a group's energy toward a shared purpose.

Facilitating CPS is offered as a public program or as a tailored, in-house program designed to meet your specific needs.

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is CPS?</li> <li>• Conceptions and Styles of Creativity</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPS Guidelines</li> <li>• CPS Language and Tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPS Language and Tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning to Facilitate CPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPS Facilitation Practice and Feedback Sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPS Facilitation Practice and Feedback Sessions</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking CPS Forward</li> </ul>



## CPS-B 1998-99 Program Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please  the program(s) you wish to attend:

Facilitating CPS, Buffalo, NY \$1,850.00

November 2-6, 1998  
 April 26-30, 1999  
 November 1-5, 1999

**Registration Fee:** Registration fee includes materials, continental breakfast, and lunch during the course. Participants are responsible for all other expenses including lodging and travel.

**Cancellation policy:** Cancellation fees are: 10% - if notified up to thirty business days prior to course; 30% - if notified between ten and thirty business days prior to course. If notified within ten business days prior to course, registration will be transferred to a future course.

Please  payment method (Registration confirmed upon receipt of payment):

- Check Enclosed. Amount: \_\_\_\_\_. Make check payable (in US funds, drawn on a US Bank) to **CPS-B** and send to: Marves Isaksen, CPS-B, 1325 North Forest Road, Suite F-340, Williamsville, NY 14221; USA.
- Please send an invoice to the attention of: \_\_\_\_\_ at the following address: \_\_\_\_\_

## About the Communiqué

The Communiqué is an informal newsletter which is published by CPS-B. It is designed to highlight and share key information about our current developments, research and program activities.

If anyone is interested in submitting a short article, headline or calendar item, please contact Kristin Isaksen at:

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www.cpsb.com

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To help us update our records, please let us know if your address has changed. Thank you!